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593 The family is a very important entity among the Isneg, and their family life is comparatively intense. There is no question of man and wife associating only for the duties incident to the procreation of children. All members of the household keep rather close together until the young people are able to form a new family, and even in this case the latter usually remain with their elders for a considerable period of their married life. To establish a family, if possible with plenty of children around, is the ultimate goal of every Isneg boy and [671] girl. In principle the rights of the individual are subordinate to those of the family, while state paternalism cannot be thought of.

177 It is true that actually the Government often interferes with the native customs of the Isneg, and in many cases it could not very well 593 do otherwise, but the latter consider it as alien and regard its ways as entirely contrary to their traditions; they would most certainly like to get rid of it at the first opportunity. The Isneg submit of course, as the constabulary is supposed to be mostly wide awake, but they generally do so very reluctantly and often under protest; occasionally they even disobey, and sometimes not without reason, especially in cases of interference with their traditional family life.

177 Just to give a couple of examples. The local authorities force the parents to send their children to school; anybody who disregards this 871 rule is punished by being obliged to furnish free labor to the Gov- 582 ernment. Now the wisdom of this regulation cannot always reason- 593 ably be doubted, because, if no strict measures were taken, nobody would go to school. But even children of marriageable age very often fall under this rule, as Apayaw is sparsely populated and the officials are anxious to present decent reports to their superiors; and so Isneg parents who allow their children to marry, face a very disagreeable dilemma: they have either to continue to send to school, in this way breaking up the home as they understand it, or to disobey and be liable to be taken into custody by policemen. It should be noted here that the law of the land recognizes such marriages as valid, but local officials sometimes have little regard for them. By this [797] time, however, the Isneg have found a way out, namely by becoming Christians and contracting marriage before the priest. Such marriages are always duly recorded of course, and so the young people escape forced attendance at school, and the parents avoid trouble with the Government. After all it is the Church that helps the Isneg to keep to his original traditions about the essentials of marriage and home life.

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4. *Actual Moral Behavior*

And now I come to the consideration of Isneg practice as compared with theory. I always promise to be brief, but I rarely live up to my promises; so I shall see what I can do about it now.

The Isneg are far less fanatical in matters religious than, for instance, the Kankanay. Their religious practices are also comparatively few and far between, and the women usually play the most important rôle. A person who disobeys (*saúran*) any injunction of the shaman is not considered as being a traitor; he is mostly left to his own devices, although his disobedience is not exactly lauded as an act of virtue. Nevertheless not only the old women, but also the old men are usually very punctual in complying with all directions of the shaman and in observing whatever their religious convictions impose upon them. I purposely say "old" men and women, as among the younger generation, this respect for the heathen practices of their tribe seems to be on the wane. The influence of the schools which are supposed to be neutral, is a decided factor in this matter. The teachers, being Christians, have no sympathy with what they call the superstitions and ridiculous practices of the Isneg. Although perhaps they keep these sentiments to themselves during school hours, the sparseness of the population in a district where schoolboys and schoolgirls very often live far from the schoolhouse, forces many of the latter to remain in the immediate neighborhood of the teacher's house for five consecutive days every week, which necessarily allows the influence of the Christian schoolmaster to be very far-reaching.

Besides, Christians are entering Apayaw in large numbers every year, some to stay, others as transient guests. Since the country is practically pacified, nothing keeps them back any more, and so they also exert an undermining influence on all matters that relate to Isneg religion as such. This immigration coupled with Isneg temporary emigration, tends to teach the people the futility and even the error of their beliefs. Indeed an Isneg who enters the Iloko or Kagayan country, and stays there for a certain time, cannot fail to bring back a spirit of indifference with reference to his native religion.

It may be the place here to say a few words anent the relations of the Isneg with the Catholic missionary. In general it must be said that all over the Mountain Province the priest has usually met with the sympathy of the natives. During the Philippine Revolution against Spain, when Spanish friars were taken into custody by the

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insurgents, the Hapaw people (Ifugaw) hid their priest in the forest for a considerable time; and I am sure that our Negritos and Isneg would do the same to us if necessary. They are supposed to be inferior to the Christians in many respects, they themselves believe so, and the Christians do not fail to impress it upon their mind through word and deed: an Iloko or Kagayan has not respect for an Isneg, and again Iloko, Kagayan and Isneg oppress the Negrito whenever they can.

Now comes along a man who sympathizes with these pariahs, a man who understands them, a man who, although teaching a different religion, never ridicules them, a man who always puts them on the same level with other human beings, a man who is willing to live with them, to share their food and their mat, a man who learns their language and their customs, a man who takes their side even against the Christians when the latter are wrong: what can they feel but respect and even love for such an extraordinary being? Then add to this, in the case of the Isneg, their frequent intercourse with Christians and the patent superiority of the latter's civilization, which excites the ambition of the former, and it will not be wondered at that the priest and his religion are respected, that Isneg mothers bring their children for baptism just as the Christians do, that the Isneg youth wants to be instructed in Christian doctrine, and that Christianity is considered as the ultimate goal of a great number of Isneg young men and women.

Here among the Isneg I have never yet met with that strong opposition to baptism, which formerly was so very common among pagan Kankanay fathers and mothers in several of their villages, and if the inborn indolence of the Isneg could be done away with, all youngsters would be Christians within a very short time. In the case of old men and women, although they rarely object to Christianity as such, still they usually hold rather tenaciously to their traditional practices, which, however, does not prevent them at the same time from giving complete freedom to their offspring.

Last year at Namaltugan, two Christian Isneg intended to get married; when the groom firmly refused to have anything to do with native pagan customs, the relatives on both sides agreed to everything, except on the question of the payment that had to be given to the parents of the bride: on this they strongly insisted; it had nothing to do with religion, and so it had to be observed.

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Not so long ago I opened two dormitories for High School students, one for boys and one for girls. These young people came here directly from their villages, for the most part without having received as yet any serious Christian instruction. Since that time I have been inclined more than once to stop the whole affair; at any rate I shall certainly never again accept them indiscriminately. If I had to watch them strictly only on one side, it would not be so bad; but when even some of the girls have to be kept under close surveillance, the situation becomes almost intolerable. The dormitories had barely been started, when I had to expel one boy and one girl: it was not simply a matter of the boy writing love letters, with the girl answering them; but he openly proposed in writing to sleep with her, and the girl consented, also in writing, and gave a date for their future meeting.

Recently one of the girls from the girls' dormitory told me that, at the time she was still studying in her home village, a few of her classmates had absolutely refused to study the prayers (to prepare for baptism), and this for the following reason: "If we were Christians we should not be allowed any more to sleep with the boys at night [using each other's arm for a pillow; not: performing coitus], and this we cannot endure". The last part of this sentence is here put down textually, just as I heard it.

Coeducation which obtains in the public schools helps not a little to take away the small restraint that native Isneg teaching may have produced, and the example of persons who should show them better ways is sometimes far from being an aid to our frail young people on the arduous path of purity and chastity.

Nevertheless children born out of wedlock are the exception. How can we explain this? There is no question of contraceptive measures or voluntary abortion as far as I know, so the reason has to be found elsewhere. This state of affairs may be explained either by the practice of solitary vice or by marriage subsequent on the pregnancy of the girl in every case. Now the latter explanation is in my opinion more often concordant with the actual facts than the former. The boys go to *mamabdy* (court the girls) early in life, and they may have had sex relations very often before the dreaded result occurred. Besides Isneg boys and girls marry very early, and they are allowed to sleep together as soon as they are engaged, so that it is an easy matter to arrange everything in such a way as not to cause the child to be considered as born out of wedlock. Public education as it is in